Road connectivity of North-Eastern States

1130. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether North-Eastern States are poorly connected by road with each other and with other parts of India and what special projects are being taken up to improve this situation; and

(b) the time it would take to bring the region at par with other States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Development and improvement of National Highways is a continuous process and the works are undertaken depending upon availability of funds and their *inter-se* priority on all India basis. North Eastern Region is served by 28 National Highways aggregating to 6880 km length. All the State capitals of the region are connected by a network of National Highways. However, special programmes have been envisaged by the Ministry for upgradation of road connectivity of the region. To connect the region with rest of the country, East-West corridor is being constructed to 4-lane standards, 678 km length of which is located in North East from Silchar to Srirampur, the border of Assam and West Bengal. All State capital towns of the region are proposed to be connected by 4-lane and all the district headquarters are proposed to be connected by at least 2-lane roads under National Highways Development Programme-III (NHDP-III) and the Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for North Eastern Region (SARDP-NE), covering improvement/upgradation of 9788 km roads of various categories, *viz.* National Highways, State roads, Strategic roads and GS roads. The Special Accelerated Road Development Programme is divided in 2 phases. Only Phase 'A' comprising 2304 km roads has been approved by the Government for implementation.

(b) 678 km portion of East West corridor under National Highways Development Programme-II is targeted for completion by 2010. NHDP-III covering widening to 4-lane of 1051 km National Highways and Phase 'A' of SARDP-NE are targeted for completion by 2013. Regarding Phase 'B' covering improvement of 6433 km roads, it is too early to indicate the target for its completion, as implementation decision is yet to be taken by the Government.

Committee's suggestions for old vessels

1131. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Expert Committee has suggested stopping of vessels older than 25 years from sailing in Indian waters and by 2010 phasing out all oil tankers with single hull, etc.;

(b) if so, by when these recommendations would be implemented; and

(c) how many marine accidents happened in the years 2005 and 2006 and whether ship wrecks were mostly of ships over 25 years old?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The Committee on Urgent Measures for Prevention of Marine Casualties and Emergency Response has *inter-alia* made following suggestions:

(i) An Advisory be issued warning all flags and ship-owners to discourage vessles over 25 years of age from plying in Indian Territorial Waters during the monsoon months.

(ii) Chartering permission under section 406 and 407 of Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 should not be given by the Directorate General of Shipping to vessels more than 25 years of age during the foul weather monsoon seasons.

(iii) All oil tankers engaged during the monsoon season should be double hull in advance of the final phase out year of 2010 or fulfil the Conditional Assessment Scheme (CAS) requirements regardless of age.

(b) The recommendations of the Committee are under the consideration of the Government.

(c) The information available in regard to marine accidents and casualties involving Indian ships on Indian coast and Indian seasfarers for the year of 2005, 2006 and 2007 (till 1st July, 2007) is given below.

Marine Accidents	2005	2006	2007 (Till 1st July, 07)
Ships			
Collisions	12	5	11
Groundings	8	7	8
Fire/Explosion/Sinking	5	1	2
TOTAL:	25	13	21
Seamen			
Accidental death	45	26	29
Suicide	1	Nil	4
Natural death	4	19	8
Injured	5	12	12
Missing	25	12	4
Total	80	69	57

The data for the ship wrecks on the coast of India during the period from 2005, 2006 and 2007 (upto 1st July, 2007) for ships above 25 years of age is as under.

Sl.No.	Year	No. of Ships
1.	2005	3
2.	2006	4
3.	2007	12